# Hearing Conservation Program Lesson Guide #2



#### OBJECTIVES: Upon

### completion of this topic, you will be able to:

- Identify the Navy's hearing conservation program.
- Define noise hazards and describe how they are identified.
- Describe the various types of hearing protection used by the Navy.
- Describe hearing test requirements.

#### Background

- Hearing Loss
  - Exposure to high levels of continuous noise or sudden, impact noise can cause permanent hearing loss.
  - Hearing loss is preventable.
  - The Navy's program is designed to "conserve" hearing.

#### NAVY Hearing Conservation Program



The goal of the Navy's hearing conservation program:

Prevention through Education &

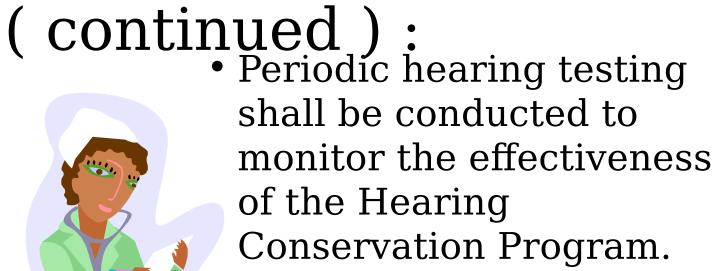
#### Goals (continued):

- Prevent occupational hearing loss and ensure auditory fitness for duty in the military and civilian workforce.
- Prevent noise exposure that has been recognized as an occupational hazard related to certain trades or operations.
- Preventing hearing loss has been and continues to be a source of concern within the Navy.

#### Program Elements

- Work environments shall be surveyed to identify potentially hazardous noise levels and personnel at risk.
- Environments that contain or equipment that produces potentially hazardous noise shall be modified to reduce the noise level to acceptable levels, if feasible.

## Program Elements ( continued



 Education is vital to the overall success of a Hearing Conservation Program.

## The Navy's Responsibilities

- BUMED centrally manages the Hearing Conservation Program.
- Echelon 2 Headquarters shall provide technical assistance and engineering guidance to commands.
- CNET shall incorporate hearing conservation and engineering control guidance into all appropriate training curriculum.

#### The Navy's Responsibilities

- Commanding Officers Shall Ensure:
  - All Navy areas, work sites and equipment under their cognizance identified as noise hazardous are labeled.
  - A hearing monitoring program and a roster maintained on personnel placed in the program is instituted.
  - Hazardous noise levels are eliminated or reduced through the use of engineering controls.
  - Personal hearing protective devices are provided.

## The Navy's Responsibilities

- Commanding Officer's Shall Ensure:
   All military and and civilian
   personnel whose duties entail exposure to
   potentially hazardous noise, receive
   instruction regarding:
  - the Command Hearing Conservation Program.
  - The undesirable effects of noise.
  - The necessity of periodic hearing testing.
  - Off-duty practices which will aid in protecting hearing

## The Navy's Responsibilities

- Commanding Officers Shall Ensure:
  - All Military and Civilian personnel receive instruction regarding
    - The individual's responsibility in protecting their hearing.
    - How hearing loss affects employability / retention, job performance and career progression.

#### The Bottom Line



 Leadership by example is the key to ensuring that personnel utilize hearing protection devices.

## Permissible Exposure Limits (PEL's)

84 decibels on the "A" weighted network *O r* 84 d B A

"A" weighted means the frequencies and sound levels measured are those experienced by humans, so the meter "hears" similar to the way your ears hear.

#### PEL's (continued)

• The limit for impact noise is 140 dB.

• When exposures are likely to exceed 84 dBA, personnel shall be included in the Navy's Hearing Conservation Program

#### Noise Measurement

- Noise measurements are taken by an industrial hygienist, safety personnel, workplace monitors, or industrial hygiene technicians.
- Work environments with noise levels greater than 84 dBA (continuous or intermittent), or 140 dB peak sound pressure level for impact are analyzed / resurveyed within 30 days of any changes.

#### Noise Measurement

#### (continued)

- Measurements taken are conducted with a microphone at a height equal to the height / location of the workers ear during normal working conditions.
- Records of noise measurements are kept for a period of 50 years.
- The measurements are taken using a sound level meter and personal dosimeters.

#### Exposure Assessment

- PEL criteria shall be used to determine the degree of compliance with applicable standards.
- The designation of an area as a hazardous noise area is made by an industrial hygienist.

## Labeling of Hazardous Noise Areas & Equipment

- NAVMED 6260/2, Hazardous Noise Warning Decal
- NAVMED 6260/2A, Hazardous Noise Labels are both approved labels / decals.
- Posting of entire building is not necessary unless all areas are designated hazardous noise areas.
- Military unique equipment is excluded.

#### Hearing Tests



- All military shall receive a "reference" audiogram.
- All civilians working in designated hazardous noise areas shall receive a reference audiogram.

#### Personal Protective Hearing Devices

- Personal protective hearing devices shall be worn when working or entering in an area where operations generate noise levels of:
  - Greater than 84 dBA
  - 140 peak sound pressure level or greater.
    - Double protection is required in areas where levels exceed 104dB.
  - All personnel exposed to gunfire.

#### Recordkeeping

- Hearing tests shall be recorded and be a permanent part of an employee's health record; personal noise dosimetry data must also be placed into the health record.
- All hearing tests shall be recorded on a DD 2215, Reference Audiogram or DD 2216, Hearing Conservation Data, as appropriate.
- A current roster of all the personnel in a hearing conservation program

#### Noise Abatement



- Existing Hazards
  - Engineering design
  - Damping the noise
  - Acoustical enclosures
  - Isolation
  - Substitution
  - Administrative controls (work schedules)

#### Noise Abatement

Future designs

- Systems Engineering

- Improved installation methods

#### Review and Summary



Don't let the sound pirate slowly steal your

 Hazardous noise levels are a fact of life in industrial areas. The Navy program was developed to identify these noisy areas, post warnings, provide protective equipment, and routinely test our worker's hearing.